Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of the Claims:

1. – 3. (Canceled)

4.   (Currently Amended) A method for supporting failover between networked storage systems, coupled between a first storage system and a second storage system and a set of one or more storage systems, comprising:

     providing a single homogeneous environment distributed across several a plurality of processors, cards, and storage systems;

     identifying member candidates using a standard protocol;

     creating Failover Sets, each Failover Set comprising one or more of said member candidates;

     using a database to store and synchronize a configuration on all member candidates in a Failover Set;

for each Failover Set, designating one of ~~its~~ the member candidates

as a Primary, designating one of ~~its~~ the member candidates as a

Secondary, and designating remaining member candidates as Alternates;

performing startup processing of the member candidates; and

providing policies for run-time member behavior including fault

characterization and detection, health monitoring, compatibility

requirements, corrective action during failover, member restart and re-

integration, and [the] member failure limit exceeded condition.

5.　　(Currently Amended)　The method of claim ~~1~~ 4 wherein said storage

systems include a single chassis-based product.

6.　　(Currently Amended)　The method of claim ~~1~~ 4 wherein said storage

systems include a single stack-based product.

7.　　(Currently Amended)　The method of claim ~~1~~ 4 wherein said storage

systems include two or more chassis-based products.

8.　　(Currently Amended)　The method of claim ~~1~~ 4 wherein said storage

systems include two or more stack-based products.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [1] 4 wherein redundant

network links between said networked storage systems are employed by:

a Discovery Service to identify said member candidates and verify

connectivity by confirming information exchanged in each network;

an Arbitration Service to ensure that a member candidate's role is

Primary, a member candidate's role is Secondary, and remaining member

candidates' roles are Alternates, by supplying a member role in

information exchanged in each network;

a Boot Service to coordinate said member role during startup using

the type of boot by exchanging said member role in each network; and

a Policy Manger within the Failover Service to distinguish between

a communications link failure between member candidates and a real

member failure by sending a self-test using the redundant network to

determine if said member candidate is functioning according to [its] a

specification.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein said network links include

different network protocols.

11.   (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein user configuration and management requests are load balanced across all of said member candidates.

12.   (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein multi-path programming for attached host and storage devices is load balanced across all of said member candidates and comprises:

a port failover policy which is used to intelligently match server storage requests to compatible storage devices comprising;

an Active-Active policy where all paths to an exported virtual device can transfer commands and data simultaneously; and

an Active-Passive policy where only one path to said exported virtual device can transfer commands and data at a time.

13.   (Original) A system for supporting failover between networked storage systems, coupled between a first storage system and a second storage system and a set of one or more storage systems, comprising:

a Services Framework to provide a single homogeneous environment distributed across [several] a plurality of processors, cards, and storage systems;

a set of configuration and management software called Services

that execute on top of the Services Framework comprising:

a Discovery Service to identify member candidates using a

standard protocol; and

a Failover Service to organize the members into various

compositions call Failover Sets, including Single, Hierarchical and N-way

compositions;

a database management system to store and synchronize the

configuration on all members in the failover set;

an Arbitration Service to determines that one member's role is

Primary, one member's role is Secondary, and the remaining member's

roles are Alternates;

a Boot Service to coordinate the member role during startup using

the type of boot; and

a Policy Manager within the Failover Service to provide policies for

run-time member behavior including fault characterization and detection,

health monitoring, compatibility requirements, corrective action during

failover, member restart and re-integration, and the member failure limit

exceeded condition.